

Fitness & Sports

All-Air Force team meets challenges on and off court

By 2nd Lt. Celeste Rodriguez
437th Communications Squadron

The All-Air Force Basketball Team roster was sharpened to the final 12 players last week when the coaching staff made final cuts from the Air Force training camp's original 27 candidates.

According to Ed Simpson, co-captain and a three-year team veteran from Keesler AFB, Miss., even an invitation to the strenuous, three-week training camp is an honor limited to those who perform well both on and off the court, and preparation for the three-week challenge is not an overnight affair.

Vernon Turnbull, assigned to the 93 MXS at Robins AFB, Ga., spent six years honing his skills before attending last year's camp. Originally from the U.S. Virgin Islands, Turnbull made the team without any previous college court time and credited his friends from the Robins "lunch time crew" who tested him with daily drills and practice.

"I've been waiting for this for a while and am excited about it [the Armed Forces Tournament], " Turnbull said. "I would like to thank my supervisor and commander for the opportunity to come out here. Though some people think it's a vacation, it's not all fun."

Far from any holiday, the team weathered three solid weeks of practice and scrimmage sessions in addition to playing 10 exhibition games against local collegiate and semi-pro teams.

Even with such a demanding



Photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Rodier

All Air Force team: (front row, left to right) Ty Wilson, Otis Jones, Mark Watley, Ramon Moss, Vernon Turnbull, Eddie Dawkins. (Second row, left to right) Head Coach Don Fellers, Jarmica Reese, Troy Myles, William Griffith, Miguel Garcia, Edward Simpson, Gregory Streeter, Trainer Tony Milunas, Asst. Coach Bonnie Daye.

schedule, the limited spare time the team was allowed was spent as Air Force spokesmen, as they visited several places throughout the local community.

In addition to speaking with Fort Dorchester High School JROTC cadets about military careers, the team signed autographs for more than 50 children during a team visit to the CAFB Youth Center.

For Ramon Moss, a second-year team member from Kelly AFB, Texas, the pride of representing the service has not faded.

"It's a wonderful feeling to be an ambassador for the Air Force," he said. "This is a great learning experience and you not only use it on the court, but on the job as well. It's a privilege to be here."

Saturday's game against the

College of Charleston held special significance as the team celebrated Veteran's Day with a visit to the Ralph H. Johnson VA Medical Center before the game. Sharing stories and fellowship with the veterans proved to be one of the training camp's greatest highlights for Tyrone Wilson, a first-time team member stationed at Tinker AFB, Okla.

"It didn't dawn on me until we went to the VA hospital that for us to represent the entire Air Force is a big accomplishment," Wilson said. "We talked to the ones who paved the way for us."

With an entire season's worth of training packed into the past three weeks, Head Coach Don Fellers and Assistant Coach Bonnie Daye, both from Pope AFB, N.C., feel confident the team

is ready for this week's final test in the Armed Forces Tournament.

The team remained strong amidst their busy line-up of exhibition play, but will be challenged by six games during three days of fast-paced tournament competition.

According to Daye, CAFB will give Air Force a definite home-field advantage after playing so many exhibition games on the road.

"If you go into someone's backyard, it's hard to win," Daye said. "I'd like to see those guys come here and get some home cooking. Our team feels there's warmth here. You play harder at home and for Mom."

Fellers, the son of an Air Force retired chief master sergeant, dedicates the team's overall effort to Airman 1st Class Tony Whitley, a training camp candidate from Hulburt Field, FL. Whitley turned down his invitation to the camp upon that news that his daughter, Briana, would require heart surgery.

"People need to see the human element of what we do," Fellers said. "These are real people with issues on their plates day in and day out. Our guys are good people first, good ball players second."

The team will conclude Armed Forces Tournament play today as they face the U.S. Navy at noon and the U.S. Marines Corps at 8 p.m. For more information, call 963-3347. **(Final tournament standings were not available at press time. They will be printed next week)**

Ingold becomes golden in week 11

By The Swami
Pigskin Prognosticator

Dennis "Aldo the Greek" Ingold has finally won!! Ingold has been a warrior all year, having played all eleven weeks, and now he gets to taste victory. Ingold had a record of 11-4, edging out "Packfan," who also was 11-4. Ingold beat him by four points in the tiebreaker score.

The Swami told you it was a tough week. There were seven people who had 10-5 records. Who would have thought the Colts could beat the Jets?

Ingold can thank "Deuce" Smith for the win. Smith forgot to pick an easy game (Rams and Giants), and of course The Swami gave him a loss for it. I bet Smith is from Florida. I hear they have trouble picking down there. Do you want me to "re-think" my decision? Forget it, loser!

With eleven weeks in the books,

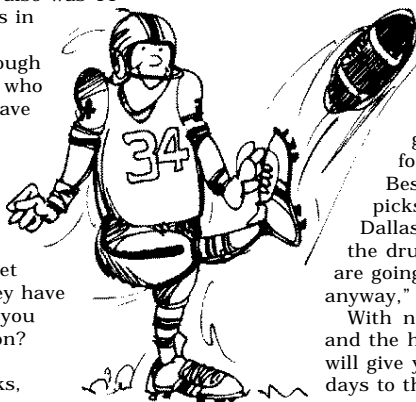
there have been eleven different winners. The Swami has been "holding back" a little, not wanting to win every week. "I like to spread the wealth, but I can easily turn into the Grinch around the holidays and start snatching the prizes," said The Swami.

As you can see in The Swami's week 13 picks, he did not include the two games on Thanksgiving.

"I'm feeling generous and will give everyone a win for those games.

Besides, they are easy picks. I know all you Dallas fans are dreading the drubbing the Vikings are going to give the "Girls" anyway," said The Swami.

With newspaper deadlines and the holiday, The Swami will give you some extra days to think your picks.



Week Thirteen

Name/Phone #: _____
Comments: _____

Sunday, Nov. 26

Buffalo @ Tampa Bay
Chicago @ NY Jets
Cleveland @ Baltimore
Miami @ Indianapolis
New Orleans @ St. Louis
Philadelphia @ Washington
Pittsburgh @ Cincinnati
Atlanta @ Oakland
Tennessee @ Jacksonville
Denver @ Seattle
Kansas City @ San Diego
NY Giants @ Arizona

Monday, Nov. 27

Green Bay @ Carolina
Monday night total points: _____
Swami's Monday night points: **41**

Swami's picks are in bold and underlined. Send picks to: Swami@charleston.af.mil. Picks can also be dropped at the Public Affairs office in Bldg. 1600. ****Picks must be submitted by Sunday, Nov. 26, 10 a.m.****